

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A ball and socket joint comprising:
  - a ball and socket joint housing having a joint opening;
  - a ball pivot, which is arranged in the ball and socket joint housing, extends through the joint opening and with which a shaft is made integral;
  - 5 a support ring arranged on the shaft of the ball pivot; and
  - a sealing element, which is arranged between the support ring and a connection component surrounding the shaft of the ball pivot wherein said sealing element comprises an elastically and/or plastically deformable profiled body having an effective cross section, which is free from the effect of forces, that is limited by a continuously extending, curved contour, which is subject to deformation in [[the]] an installed state, as a result of which at least a partial area of said contour is in contact with adjoining areas that are to be sealed, wherein one portion of said sealing element extends generally axially and is arranged, between said shaft of said ball pivot and said connection component in a radial direction of said ball pivot, and another portion of said sealing element extends radially and is arranged between said support ring and said connection component in an axial direction of said ball pivot.

2. (Previously Presented) A ball and socket joint in accordance with claim 1, wherein said elastically and/or plastically deformable profiled body has a profiled basic body and sealing segments.

3. (Previously Presented) A ball and socket joint in accordance with claim 2, wherein said sealing segments extend radially oriented in relation to said profiled basic body.

4. (Previously Presented) A ball and socket joint in accordance with claim 2, wherein transition areas are provided for connecting said profiled basic body to said sealing segments.

5. (Previously Presented) A ball and socket joint in accordance with claim 4, wherein a material or a material combination that permits elastic deflection of said sealing segments adjoining said transition area is selected for said transition area.

6. (Previously Presented) A ball and socket joint in accordance with claim 1, wherein said profiled body has a connection surface, via which said profiled body is connected to an adjoining component.

7. (Previously Presented) A ball and socket joint in accordance with claim 6, wherein said adjoining component is said support ring.

8. (Previously Presented) A ball and socket joint in accordance with claim 6, wherein the connection between said profiled body and said adjoining component is established by vulcanization or bonding.

9. (Previously Presented) A ball and socket joint in accordance with claim 6, wherein said profiled body is positioned on said ball pivot or said support ring in preparation for the mounting of said ball and socket joint.

10. (Currently Amended) A ball and socket joint in accordance with claim 9, wherein said profiled body is positioned on said adjoining component as a result of a radial expansion of said profiled body such that said profiled body forms a [[by]] positive-locking connection or non-positive connection with said adjoining component.

11. (Previously Presented) A ball and socket joint in accordance with claim 1, wherein said support ring has a radially extending flange, with which at least one said sealing segment of said profiled body is in contact under pretension.

12. (Currently Amended) A ball and socket joint in accordance with claim [[1]] 2, wherein said support ring has a radially extending flange, with a radially outer front surface of which at least one said sealing segment of said profiled body is in contact under pretension.

13. (Currently Amended) A ball and socket joint in accordance with claim 1, wherein said profiled body has at least one stabilizing element [[(21)]].

14. (Currently Amended) A motor vehicles chassis ball and socket joint comprising:

a ball and socket joint housing having a joint opening;

a ball pivot comprising a ball portion arranged in said ball and socket joint housing and  
an integral shaft portion arranged outside of said ball and socket joint housing,—said shaft  
portion having an area to be sealed;

5                   a support ring on said shaft portion,—said support ring having an area to be sealed;

                  a connection component surrounding said shaft portion,—said connection component  
having an area to be sealed;

                  a sealing element arranged between said support ring and said connection component,  
10            said sealing element comprising an elastically and/or plastically deformable profiled body having  
an effective cross section in a state not affected by compressive or tensile forces, said effective  
cross section having a continuously extending curved contour subject to deformation in [[the]]  
                 an installed state, said profiled body having a first sealing portion and a second sealing portion  
                 in said installed state, said first sealing portion extending in a radial direction of said ball pivot  
15           in said installed state such that said first sealing portion engages said connection component and  
                 said support ring, said second sealing portion extending in an axial direction of said ball pivot  
                 in said installed state such that said second sealing portion engages said shaft portion of said ball  
                 pivot said sealing element having at least a partial area of said contour in contact with said area  
to be sealed of said support ring, said area to be sealed of said shaft portion and said area to be  
20           sealed of said connection component.

15. (Previously Presented) A ball and socket joint in accordance with claim 14,

wherein said elastically and/or plastically deformable profiled body has a profiled basic body and sealing segments extending radially in relation to said profiled basic body.

16. (Previously Presented) A ball and socket joint in accordance with claim 15, wherein said profiled body includes transition areas connecting said profiled basic body to said sealing segments.

17. (Currently Amended) A ball and socket joint in accordance with claim 14, wherein said contact engagement between said profiled body, said connection component and one of said areas to be sealed said shaft of said ball pivot comprises a connection established by vulcanization or bonding.

18. (Currently Amended) A ball and socket joint in accordance with claim 14, wherein said support ring has a radially extending flange having [[said]] an area to be sealed of said support ring, said radially extending flange being in contact with said profiled body under pretension or compression.

19. (Previously Presented) A ball and socket joint in accordance with claim 14, wherein said profiled body has at least one stabilizing element.

20. (New) A ball and socket joint in accordance with claim 1, wherein said sealing

element maintains said shaft of said ball pivot at a radially spaced location from said connection component, said sealing element maintaining said support ring at an axially spaced location from said connection component.